

Lyme Disease



Be aware of this tickborne illness

May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in a recent year more than 23,000 cases of Lyme Disease were reported. This disease lives in squirrels, mice and other small mammals and is passed to humans through black-legged, or deer, ticks.

Outdoor workers who live in the Northeast and North-Central states are most at risk because of the tick population in these areas, but cases have been reported in almost all 50 states. The CDC lists these jobs as at risk:

Of course, you can be exposed to infected ticks at home and at play as well. Here's how to avoid exposure whenever you go outside:

- Wear a hat, light-colored clothing, long-sleeved shirts and long pants tucked into shoes or socks.
- Use insect repellents containing 20% to 30% DEET on your skin or clothing, or reapply repellents as needed.
- Use insecticides such as Permethrin for greater protection. Permethrin can be used on clothing but not on skin.
- Check your skin and clothes for ticks every day. Remove ticks from your body using fine-tipped tweezers.
- Grasp the tick firmly and as close to your skin as possible.
- Pull the tick's body away from your skin with a steady motion. Clean the area with soap and water.
- Wash and dry clothes in a hot dryer to kill ticks. Learn the symptoms of Lyme disease. Occupational fatalities and injuries.